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MR. HOUSTON: Gentlemen; this is Mr. Powers.

Judge Prettyman presiding, General Bull, and Mr. Bross
of the Agency. Would you swear the witness?

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: We will have to swear you, Mr. Powers, as we
have sworn all the rest of them.

. . . . Mr. Powers was then sworn as a witness by Judge
Prettyman

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Mr. Houston is going to ask you some questions,
Mr. Powers, and you just relax and take it easy.

MR. HOUSTON: The Board may ask questions at any time as they
see fit. The Board is fairly familiar with the breakdown of this case,
Mr. Powers, so we will try to follow on looking into those things which, of
course, you have already been debriefed and questioned, but we want to
repeat some of it for the record.

When were you first approached in connection with the U-2
Project? Do you recall?

MR. POWERS: I would say about February of 1956, but I can't
be positive.

MR. HOUSTON: And you were informed of the nature of the Project
at that time?

MR. POWERS: I was not immediately, no.


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MR. HOUSTON: In a subsequent meeting after the first?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: And you agreed to resign from the Air Force?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: And became a contract employee of CIA?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: And you knew it was CIA

MR. POWERS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: And was the U-2 flying by this time?

MR. POWERS: Yes, it was.

MR. HOUSTON: So you were assigned to flight training [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]
MR. POWERS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: Aside from flight training, did you have any
other training by the Agency?

MR. POWERS: I don't know what you would call it. It was a
sort of survival and evasion.

MR. HOUSTON: Escape and evasion?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: Is it primarily what to do if you landed in enemy
territory?

MR. POWERS: Yes, how to get through fences; how to live off
the land.

MR. HOUSTON: Did this particular area of training, to your

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recollection, also include how to behave if you fell into Soviet hands?

MR. POWERS: I can't remember anything on that.

MR. HOUSTON: When you completed your flight training, and the unit was ready, I believe you were sent directly to Adana, Turkey.

MR. POWERS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: When did you arrive there? Do you recall?

MR. POWERS: August of 1956 -- latter part of August.

MR. POWERS: And Adana was your station from then until the 1 May flight?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: You performed other missions from Adana -- from other airports?

MR. POWERS: Yes, I did.

MR. HOUSTON: Roughly, what type of missions outside of pure travel, what type of missions in the U-2?

MR. POWERS: I had two other flights over the Soviet Union, or over enemy territory. There had been --

MR. HOUSTON: You had two --

MR. POWERS: -- two previous to the May 1st. There had been several flights over some Mid-Eastern countries; several flights along the border with electronic equipment.

MR. HOUSTON: All together, do you remember about how many?

MR. POWERS: I couldn't recall the number.

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MR. HOUSTON: Do you recollect performing missions over [REDACTED]

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MR. POWERS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: How about [REDACTED]

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MR. POWERS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: -- at the time of the [REDACTED]

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MR. POWERS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: Were you either briefed or did you have the

understanding that the fact of flying over [REDACTED]

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MR. POWERS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: Also, during your time at Adana were you aware

of any other country's participation in the U-2?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: What was that?

MR. POWERS:

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MR. POWERS:

MR. HOUSTON: Do you know whether this was considered a sensitive

matter?

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MR. POWERS: Well, I thought it was pretty sensitive.

MR. HOUSTON: You knew, I believe, that at any time another mission penetrating the Soviet air space might up and be assigned to you.

MR. POWERS: Pardon?

MR. HOUSTON: You knew at any time such a mission over the Soviet Union might have been assigned to you.

MR. POWERS: It could have been at any time.

MR. HOUSTON: Can you tell us during this time what briefings you got or what understanding you got as to what your behavior and what information you should give if you fell into Soviet hands?

MR. POWERS: There were several briefings throughout my stay there. It is hard to recall all that was said. One thing that I do remember very distinctly was being told that if something like this should happen that I may as well tell them everything, or the pilot may as well tell everything because they would get it out of you somehow anyway.

MR. HOUSTON: Did you and other pilots discuss this among yourselves?

MR. POWERS: We didn't talk about this. We talked about evading but never capture, or very seldom.

MR. HOUSTON: What was the pilots attitude - you didn't think it was too much of a likelihood?

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: You boys thought you were pretty good.

MR. POWERS: Yes.

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MR. HOUSTON: Do you remember being given a briefing paper which you might have signed?

MR. POWERS: I can't remember that.

MR. HOUSTON: Were there any specific restrictions that you remember that you were to try to protect?

MR. POWERS: I really don't remember being told anything, but it was my understanding that -- maybe because I had been told that -- to keep as much back as possible.

MR. HOUSTON: And in your opinion it leaves things pretty much to your own judgment in the situation which you found yourself.

MR. POWERS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: Incidentally, would you know when, and or what mission [REDACTED] would fly?

MR. POWERS: Some of them, but not all of them.

MR. HOUSTON: When were you informed of the overflight mission that was originally scheduled for the end of April?

MR. POWERS: I can't recall any exact date, but --

MR. HOUSTON: Very shortly before?

MR. POWERS: It was shortly before we left Adana.

MR. HOUSTON: Do you remember who notified you?

MR. POWERS: No. I think it would be either Colonel Shelton or [REDACTED]

MR. HOUSTON: Did you get any briefing before you left Adana?

MR. POWERS: We studied the possible route that might be taken for

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such flight.

MR. HOUSTON: Were you informed it would start from Peshawa?

MR. POWERS: Yes. When we got the maps the flight did start from Peshawa. We didn't know when we would go or whether they would go in. We knew that something was in the wind. We didn't know what it was.

MR. HOUSTON: How did you go to Peshawa?

MR. POWERS: I went by C-130.

MR. HOUSTON: With a group?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: From my understanding, there were some delays experienced after you got to Peshawa for several days.

MR. POWERS: I don't remember the exact days, but we arrived there. The flight was scheduled I think three times before it got off the ground.

MR. HOUSTON: And [REDACTED] came in as a back-up pilot.

MR. POWERS: Pardon?

MR. HOUSTON: [REDACTED] came in as back-up pilot.

MR. POWERS: Yes -- May 1st -- yes.

MR. HOUSTON: To your recollection was there any further briefing or discussion of possibility in a deep penetration of this sort of going down and falling into Soviet hands?

MR. POWERS: I really can't recall. I know Colonel Shelton talked

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to me before the flight, but what was said I can't recall. Before going to Pakistan I talked to [REDACTED] when we were making annotations on the maps.

MR. HOUSTON: But most of the time in Peshawa was studying the actual courses and maps and getting instructions on navigational problems.

MR. POWERS: Yes. Each morning before the flight we would go through again with the navigator and get the weather briefings.

MR. HOUSTON: Who was that -- [REDACTED]

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MR. POWERS: He was the navigator, yes.

MR. HOUSTON: Finally you got off on May 1 and the first part of the flight was uneventful.

MR. POWERS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: The Board has been shown your course as laid out. Were you able to hold pretty close to course?

MR. POWERS: There was weather a big part of the way. You couldn't see the ground.

MR. HOUSTON: Cloud cover?

MR. POWERS: Below me for quite a distance. Up near the ~~ROC~~ Aral Sea there was a clear place and clouds came in for 168 miles north of there -- I don't remember exactly how far -- and I did drift right of course.

MR. HOUSTON: Do you know about how far?

MR. POWERS: I estimate 20 to 30 miles. I really had no accurate fix.

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MR. HOUSTON: Then you corrected when you came beyond the cloud cover.

MR. POWERS: And there very close to course.

MR. HOUSTON: You had visual contact then?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: Were you on automatic at that time?

MR. POWERS: Up until about the time that the clouds went away.

MR. HOUSTON: Then you went on manual?

MR. POWERS: I was on automatic until that time. I started having some trouble with the automatic pilot and decided to continue by hand.

MR. HOUSTON: Did you finally discard the automatic entirely?

MR. POWERS: I didn't use it at all.

MR. HOUSTON: Did you see any indication of Russian fighter aircraft?

MR. POWERS: In the ^{Aral Sea} ~~USSR~~/I saw two condensation trails. I had the impression they were looking for me. I estimated approximately 20 miles right of course. The first one was parallel to my course, heading in an opposite direction and a few minutes later, parallel to my course, heading in the same direction I was in, and that is the only condensation trails I saw.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Did he catch up to you and pass you?

MR. POWERS: Yes, he went right on by, but he was going fast.

MR. HOUSTON: Now when you came up you had Sverdlovsk in sight and you were to make a turn there.

MR. POWERS: I had already completed the turn there.

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MR. HOUSTON: Where did you make the turn?

MR. POWERS: I think Southeast of Sverdlovsk. It was a left turn, more than 90 degrees - I don't remember.

MR. HOUSTON: Sverdlovsk was in sight when you came in line with it.

MR. POWERS: Yes. I had seen it further South.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: How big is Sverdlovsk?

MR. POWERS: It looks big from the air.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Is it as big as Richmond?

MR. POWERS: I've never seen Richmond.

MR. HOUSTON: A city rather than a town?

MR. POWERS: It is a city, yes.

MR. HOUSTON: So it is a very noticeable thing.

MR. POWERS: Yes.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: You came up from far off and you were heading straight for Sverdlovsk --

MR. HOUSTON: I think the testimony is that he had been on the course to the right of Sverdlovsk and made a turn which brought him directly in line.

MR. POWERS: As I can remember the course that I was on was heading maybe just a little North of East. I turned to a heading of Northwest -- somewhere in that direction.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: And you headed right for Sverdlovsk.

MR. POWERS: As well as I can remember, going over the Southern


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edge of the city. I don't remember going over the Northern edge.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: This turn you made, was a left turn before or after you got to Sverdlovsk?

MR. POWERS: I made it before.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Turned you to the left and that threw you to the South.

MR. POWERS: If I remember correctly the line went over the Southeastern outskirts of the city and directly over an airfield that was not indicated on the map.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: And you came to this left turn and you made the left turn.

MR. POWERS: Yes.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Then you rolled out on flight. Is that a correct expression?

MR. POWERS: On course, yes.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Now did you make another turn?

MR. POWERS: No.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: That was the turn.

MR. POWERS: That was the last turn I made.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: You turned left then you rolled out on course and that is the spot where you had your trouble.

MR. POWERS: Well, a short time after that -- very short. It couldn't have been more than two minutes and I think less.

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JUDGE PRETTYMAN: And you were at 70,000 feet?

MR. POWERS: 70,000, yes.

MR. HOUSTON: Had you been observing Sverdlovsk just before
this happened?

MR. POWERS: Yes, I could see it well. It was very clear.

MR. HOUSTON: Do you think you were over the city, or just where?

MR. POWERS: I had come up going probably a little East and
North then it would be about a 90 degree turn going toward the city.

MR. HOUSTON: Did you think you were pretty close to it?

MR. POWERS: I was within 25 to 30 miles of the city I think
when this happened.

. . . . Russian maps were then brought into the room

MR. HOUSTON: If you would come up here maybe we could try to
pin this down. There is Sverdlovsk [indicating].

. . . . The meeting then went off the record

MR. HOUSTON: To go on the record we can say Mr. Powers, having
completed the prescribed turn, you were approaching Sverdlovsk from the East
and approaching the Southern outskirts of the city.

MR. POWERS: I would state 25 to 35 miles away.

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MR. HOUSTON: And that is when you felt whatever this impulse was.

MR. POWERS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: And looked up and saw the orange flash.

MR. POWERS: Yes.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Can I make a suggestion, Mr. Houston? Let's ask Mr. Powers just to tell in his own way, without any questioning to go ahead and say what is on your mind and describe to us about this particular incident.

MR. HOUSTON: That is what I was going to do.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Do it just in your own fashion and in your own time.

MR. POWERS: After making the turn I was recording the time that I had reached this turning point.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: You had this flight log on your knee.

MR. POWERS: Yes, on my knee, and this was standard procedure on all flights -- the weather conditions, the engine instrument readings, the oxygen, fuel remaining and it was while I was doing this that I felt and heard this explosion. At first I didn't think there was anything wrong - I mean with the aircraft itself. I have no idea of how much time elapsed in here. It seemed like a long time but I'm sure it wasn't. It seemed like everything was very still for what seemed like a minute or two but I'm sure it couldn't have been that long. When I heard this thing I looked up and all I could see everywhere I looked was just orange. It wasn't an explosion like a flash bulb - just orange color all over the sky, or maybe it was my canopy that was that color, but everywhere I looked it was orange.


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JUDGE PRETTYMAN: You think it might have been your canopy?

MR. POWERS: No, it would have to be the reflection of something off -- something off the canopy. The canopy itself was perfectly clear.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: What time of day was it? Could it have been the sun?

MR. POWERS: No, it couldn't have been the sun. This was a color I had never seen before.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: It couldn't have been any neon signs from Sverdlovsk.

MR. POWERS: No, it was the result of the explosion, whatever it was.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: You are pretty sure it was an explosion. Was it loud, or did it shake you, or did the plane shudder?

MR. POWERS: No, there was no shudder to the aircraft. There seemed to be a slight acceleration like it had been pushed a little bit. I remember no vibrations of the aircraft.

MR. HOUSTON: Did the engine keep turning over?.

MR. POWERS: It was turning over at the time I looked up. I don't know when it stopped after that.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Did you think that you lost something off the airplane?

MR. POWERS: Not at that time.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: That wasn't your instant reaction.

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MR. POWERS: That is similar to my reaction but it was a little different. "My God I've had it." Now I don't remember. I don't remember whether I was thinking or said it aloud.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: But your instant reaction was something had happened.

MR. POWERS: I knew something had happened but I didn't know what.

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[REDACTED] Was this at the time of the push?

MR. POWERS: Well, the push and the explosion all happened at the same time.

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[REDACTED] The color and push happened at the same time.

MR. POWERS: I saw the color immediately after the push. I really don't know exactly what the sensation was at the time. It seems like I could feel this and also it seemed like I could hear a dull -- something like a WHOOOMP -- a dull thud of some kind -- not as if anything had hit something, but well, an explosion but very dull.

MR. HOUSTON: Was it a little like the distant sound of a plane going through a sound barrier?

MR. POWERS: No, it wasn't that sharp, much duller.

GENERAL BULL: Was there any possibility that you might have been exceeding the rating performance of the plane?

MR. POWERS: I had never thought anything about this until the doctor asked me that during some of my talks with him since I have been back and I am sure that was not the case. It wouldn't have happened like this.

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GENERAL BULL: Would the performance have been like that
had you lost a stabilizer fin?

MR. POWERS: There would have been no noise or no
acceleration. I can't be sure this was an acceleration, but it felt to me
as if there was, but you have different reactions from the aircraft when
you are approaching the mock limitations of the aircraft.

MR. HOUSTON: We would like to take a break to substitute
stenographers.

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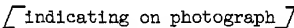
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(Continuation of Mr. Powers' testimony)

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Now you go ahead and tell us what happened. Take your own time and tell it in your own way, just what you want to say.

MR. POWERS: Well, immediately after this explosion I looked up, saw this orange glow -- I think I looked back at the engine instruments and everything looked fine. The aircraft started making -- well, the right wing started dropping, like making a turn to the right, very normal, nothing abrupt, no snaps -- you just run into it all the time in an aircraft. I turned the wheel to the left and the wing came back up, and as the wing was coming up, or after I reached a level position the nose started going down. I applied brake pressure on the control column and there was no connection - it was completely loose.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: I don't want to interrupt, but when it made this slight right turn -- and I don't know the words to use -- you pulled on whatever it is you pull, you pulled it back in line -- at that point you had control of the airplane--

MR. HOUSTON: The stick is here , and by turning this--

MR. POWERS: Like the wing went down -- I turned this wing to the left and it brought the wing up.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: What I want to get straight -- at that point you had control of the airplane. In other words, whatever this machinery was you pulled on it and it worked and the plane went back. Now how long after that was when the nose started down and you pulled this time and you didn't have any control?

MR. POWERS: Either while this wing was coming up or immediately after


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it reached the level position. And the nose just very gradually started dropping -- and this is perfectly normal also -- but when I pulled back on the control column to bring the nose up, it was lost, there was no resistance to the control column.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Does that mean to you that something happened between the time you pulled the plane out of this right turn it had gone into and the time that the nose started down and you pulled on the stick -- something happened right in that fraction of time?

MR. POWERS: I don't know exactly when it happened, but it was at that time.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: It must have been in between there, because you had control as you brought it out of the curve?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: And then you didn't have control.

MR. POWERS: Well, I had control of the ailerons, the wing control, but I don't know whether there was any tail control or not.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Well, you see, I didn't understand that. Go ahead now.

MR. POWERS: The nose started going down very slowly, which is a perfectly normal reaction of the airplane as it flies along. I applied pressure on the stick to bring the nose up, and the stick -- there was no resistance to the movement of the stick, and the odd part about this is that I felt no vibrations in the control column. I believe if one cable had snapped that it would have jerked the stick some way -- but I felt none of this, or at least I could not recall this. The first idea

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that I had that something was wrong with the control system was when it was just loose and the nose started going down faster and faster, and it seems to me it got almost in a vertical position, pointing straight to the ground. And I assumed that the wings came off there -- I really don't know, but there was a very, very violent maneuver. I don't know what went on at this particular time. I don't even know how long it lasted, but it didn't seem very long.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Something big happened to the plane at that point.

MR. POWERS: It was really going through some maneuvers. After that it settled down in an inverted nose position spinning I think counter-clockwise.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: When you say an inverted position -- you were upside down? You were heading toward the ground yourself?

MR. POWERS: The nose was pointed -- well, I'll use this fountain pen as an example here -- this is the nose of the aircraft, and it seemed that it was pointed up - I don't know the angle, but all I could see with my head down this way looking out of the front of the aircraft all I could see was sky spinning around -- the aircraft seemed like it was standing still and the sky was spinning. I saw no ground, no clouds, nothing at all except blue sky going around. I don't know how long after this spin started that I thought that I've got to get out of here and destroy the aircraft. There were several G forces - I don't know how many - that were forcing me toward the nose of the aircraft and also toward the top of the canopy -- but I estimated a 45 degree angle above the nose of the aircraft -- and I was forward in the seat because of these forces. I had the destruct switches on the right of the aircraft within easy reach here -- I remember reaching my arm up to the

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destruct switch. There was, if I remember correctly, a 72 second time delay between the time these switches were actuated and the time the explosion was to take place. But as I got my hand there I can remember thinking: well, you better see if you can get out first.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: That destructor switch was forward of your position in the cockpit -- you reached forward? It wasn't right by your shoulder--

MR. POWERS: No. It was forward and on the right. This is it here [indicating on photograph] -- two switches. I brought my hand back, and I said I better see if I can get out of here first. Then I tried to get back in my seat -- because there isn't much clearance in the aircraft ejection seat, and if you're too far forward you cut your legs off as you go out. Well, I couldn't - with both hands and both feet - force myself back in the seat. And during this time I could only think of one way to get out -- the ejection seat, that is the only way to get out -- and I kept trying to move back in position for what seemed a long time. During this time I remembered an incident that happened to another pilot in the U-2, that he was having trouble getting out of an aircraft crisis one time and he said that he told himself you've got to stop and think, and that came to me during this time, and that is what I did -- I told myself I had to stop and think. And it came to me at that time that I could just open the canopy and maybe climb out. I can remember the last time I saw the altimeter, before attempting to do any of these, I was at 34,000 feet, or a little on either side, but I can remember the 34.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: About half-way down, in other words.

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MR. POWERS: Getting close. I reached up and caught the canopy handles. There is one on each side, one for normally opening the canopy to get in and out of the aircraft, that is on the right side, and then the emergency release is on the left side -- and they're two levers you just grab and pull back -- I grabbed those, pulled them back, and the canopy opened as it normally does first, and then when the other one came all the way back it flew off it seemed to the left.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: That was the end of the canopy -- the canopy came clean off?

MR. POWERS: Yes, it disappeared at that time. I saw it later at the display in Moscow -- a part of it.

When this canopy came off my faceplate fogged up and I couldn't see further than just in front of my nose here. I remember reaching down and unfastening my seat belt -- I had already pulled my emergency oxygen bottle -- I guess that is one of the first things I did when it started spinning.

MR. HOUSTON: Excuse me -- your pressure suit was inflated?

MR. POWERS: I didn't know when it inflated, but it did, because I could feel the resistance when I was trying to get into the ejection position.

MR. HOUSTON: It adds considerably to the difficulty of moving?

MR. POWERS: It adds considerably to it because it makes you very stiff -- but it doesn't work above 42,000 feet, I think.

I unfastened the seat belt and it was immediately thrown forward and out of the aircraft. I hadn't unfastened my oxygen hose, which was something I should have done but I had forgotten.

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JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Is that oxygen hose fastened to the plane, or to the seat, or what?

MR. POWERS: It was fastened from my seat pack, which is attached to the parachute, to the left-hand console of the aircraft -- the left-hand side down in a lower left position right beside the seat. I think that is what kept me in the airplane instead of going all the way out at the time. I was -- well, I'll have to demonstrate this, if I can, I suppose. The top of the canopy is sort of a semi-circle. The wind screen in front of the canopy -- I mean the cockpit -- the canopy had already gone -- I was hanging -- say this is the top of it -- I was in some position about like this [demonstrating] -- completely out of the aircraft. And there was a rear view mirror here I had knocked off at the time, and I can remember seeing it seemed like it went straight ahead. I suppose that the oxygen hose was what was holding me in the aircraft. I tried to get back in the aircraft at the time, and couldn't move -- couldn't get back away from this windshield of the airplane. I tried to reach back around underneath the canopy to the destruct switches, and couldn't reach them. That is all I can remember trying to do right there, but I don't know how long I tried to do this, but I knew I was getting close to the ground. I can remember giving a lunge -- just a kick, and something gave, and it just seemed like I was floating. Very shortly after this -- I have no way to estimate this time accurately but it seemed to me less -- I know it was less than a minute, and maybe just a matter of seconds, the parachute opened.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Now tell me this -- if you were at 70,000 feet and the plane -- just exactly as you described -- goes into this nose dive and starts

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circling around, do you know from any of your expert knowledge of the plane how much time it takes -- how long? Well, let me ask this: where your parachute opened you don't know exactly how far from the ground it was - was it 10,000 or 15,000?

MR. POWERS: I can estimate where this parachute opened. I intended to open it myself, but I didn't, and there is an automatic device on the parachute so that if you use the ejection seat and blow yourself out of the airplane then when you leave the seat it pulls this automatic function of the parachute, and if I'm not mistaken it was set for 15,000 feet.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: So that you were at 70,000 feet and then the plane went into the nose dive and then started to swirling around, and your chute opened -- it was from 70,000 down to 15,000. Now then, if somebody told you -- you weren't involved at all but somebody told you that that had happened, would you have a notion of how long that would take?

MR. POWERS: No idea.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: There is no general experience that could say it was 30 seconds, or a minute--

MR. POWERS: None that I know of. Because the thing was spinning, and how long it would take to drop or how fast it was falling, I don't know.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: At any rate, you didn't have any time to go get a drink of water and light a cigarette--

MR. POWERS: No -- I seemed to be pretty busy all this time. But I estimate that the altitude was under 15,000 feet, because with the automatic function of the parachute there is a two second time delay -- so you reach 15,000 feet and in two seconds the parachute opens, or if you pull this particular automatic

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function anywhere under 15,000 feet, within two seconds it will open. Well, when I left the airplane I can only guess that the cord did not separate from the seat but hung up on the seat belt and pulled as I was thrown out of the airplane -- because it came as a surprise to me that the chute opened -- I didn't expect it to at that time.

5X1 [REDACTED] Was the face plate still fogged?

MR. POWERS: Yes -- I couldn't see out of it. I don't know how long after the chute opened that it came to me that I had to be below 15,000 feet or it wouldn't have opened automatically, so I took the face plate off and I could see again. I remember looking up checking the parachute, which was all right. And from visual observation I knew I was above 10,000 feet, but it's hard to estimate just looking at the ground how high you are -- but I would say somewhere around 12,000 feet - is the best estimate I can give -- 12 to 13, but above 10, definitely.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Pretty soon after you were thrown out of the airplane -- however you got out -- and the chute opened -- just before that happened, or right after that, I suppose the plane went on by you?

MR. POWERS: I never saw it again -- that part of it. In the parachute I saw one piece of the plane coming down -- it was a flat piece. I couldn't tell how far away it was. Something like a wing.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Why did you think it was a piece of the airplane? Because there was nothing else up there?

MR. POWERS: I didn't know of anything else up there. I just assumed it was.

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[REDACTED] Was this above you?

MR. POWERS: I saw it when it was a little above and it was directly ahead of the way I was facing when I was coming down in the chute, and it was turning something like a light, flat piece of wood that you would drop - it would flip over, it wouldn't fall straight down -- like a leaf or something like that.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: It gave you the impression it was a light piece of something.

MR. BROSS: Which way were you facing?

MR. POWERS: I can't remember.

MR. HOUSTON: Did you see Sverdlovsk on your way down?

MR. POWERS: I don't think so. I don't remember it. It seems to me I saw what I took to be an airfield control tower, but I can't be sure of that.

[REDACTED] Was the sun in your eyes?

MR. POWERS: No, it wasn't -- or at least I don't think it was. In fact, I would say it wasn't.

Now this piece -- I thought it might be a control piece - an aeleron or a rudder or something like that. But later when I got to thinking about it - it could have been a wing, it could have been any big flat piece, depending on the distance away.

[REDACTED] You couldn't judge?

MR. POWERS: I couldn't judge the distance because I didn't know how far -- but an aeleron is shaped very much like a wing. And it was -- well, I don't know -- a long ways off -- I don't know -- but I watched it a little while and

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it went down, and when it got below the horizon I couldn't see it anymore. And I think that is the only piece of the aircraft that I saw.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: You say it got beyond the horizon?

MR. POWERS: Below the horizon.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: That would indicate it was some distance off, is that right?

MR. POWERS: It was between my position and the ground -- when it got in front of the darkness of the ground I couldn't see it anymore. It could have been -- well, very close, and done the same thing, or a long way off.

I don't remember all that ran through my mind there. I know I started going through my pockets. I recalled that I had a map in one of my pockets of my flying suit. It was a map that had been given to me showing the routes so that if I had to abort the mission for any reason in say the first half of the flight -- showing the routes back to safe territory. So I took this out and tore it in small pieces and just threw it out in the air.

I remember thinking of the good luck charm with the needle in it, or the pin, and I thought: that is just too big, it would be found too easily. So I had taken my gloves off also in the parachute, and I unscrewed the loop on this coin, poured the pin out in my hand, and just dropped it loose in my pocket, thinking that even if it were seen it might be overlooked -- a pin in a pocket -- and dropped the coin.

I could see some woods that I was trying to drift the parachute

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toward, but I was going it seemed to me first one way and then the other -- the wind seemed to vary at the altitude I was going through in the parachute -- first I would drift toward the woods, and then next directly away from them.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Was the wind very heavy?

MR. POWERS: No way of telling. I was moving with the wind. It seemed very quiet and calm and smooth.

MR. HOUSTON: Was this the first time you had ever been in a parachute?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Did you enjoy it?

MR. POWERS: No, not this trip.

That is all I can recall doing coming down in this parachute.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Tell us this -- after you hit the ground some people came - some people were there. Were they townspeople, or farmers, or could you tell?--since they were Russians, did you know the difference?

MR. POWERS: They were just people.

MR. HOUSTON: In the first place, though, did you have sort of a routine landing?

MR. POWERS: Well, as I got close to the ground the ground seemed to be coming up much faster than it was before. I can remember seeing a car -- I don't think it was directly in front of me, I think it was off to my right, but coming along the road keeping more or less parallel with me as I was drifting along. It got in front of me, came into a village, turned to the left, to the outskirts of

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the village, and two men got out. There were two -- there was a tractor with a tractor driver on it and another man standing around beside the tractor -- and I hit I guess within 25 or 30 feet of those two men.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: This tractor -- was that on a piece of farmland there?

MR. POWERS: They said later that it was a collective farm.

MR. HOUSTON: It was cultivated land?

MR. POWERS: Well, the land I hit in had not been plowed -- but they might have been doing it at that time -- I don't remember.

MR. HOUSTON: Just a field.

MR. POWERS: Yes.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: And this tractor was a farm cultivator?

MR. POWERS: It was a big tractor, it appeared to me, but I don't know what kind it was.

MR. HOUSTON: Did you retain full consciousness when you hit?

MR. POWERS: Yes. I hit the ground and before I could get on my feet or collapse my parachute one of the men -- I think the one on the tractor, but I'm not sure -- went out and grabbed the parachute and started pulling - spilling the air out of it. While he was doing that I unfastened one of the straps from the parachute which just let it collapse. Then either one or two of them helped me to my feet.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: How close to this village were you at this point --

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I mean, were you a hundred yards or so, or a long way off?

MR. POWERS: I think about a hundred yards.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: How big a village was it? Were there two houses,
ten houses--

MR. POWERS: More than two but not a great many. I would say maybe
ten -- something like that. Maybe a little larger. I really don't know.

MR. HOUSTON: This car was fairly close to you, too?

MR. POWERS: Yes, he was between me and the village - the car itself.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: They put you in the car, didn't they?

MR. POWERS: They helped me get my helmet off first -- helped me
to my feet. All the people were coming all the time during this time, and by the
time I got my helmet off there was a crowd there -- a lot of children -- apparently
there was a school in this village -- and I don't know how many adults, but
several -- quite a few - in fact, I think five -- I think there were five that put
me in the car and took me to another larger village.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: They put you in the car, and they didn't take you
to this little village but to another larger one. How far would you guess that was -
a mile? 10 miles? 20 miles? Was it a long ride or just a little one?

MR. POWERS: I think it took about 30 minutes to get there -- but
it was a dirt road, and muddy, and we stopped for a train that went by.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: The track crossed the road?

MR. POWERS: Yes. I might be able to locate this area on a map -


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a detailed map. I don't know.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: It was about a 30 minute ride, but there was no way to tell because the road was muddy, etc.

MR. POWERS: I couldn't tell the speed. I was in the front seat, but I didn't look for the speed.

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[REDACTED] Was it an electric railroad?

MR. POWERS: I don't think so.

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[REDACTED] You didn't notice any overhanging wire?

MR. POWERS: No, I don't remember seeing any at all. I think this train that came by was steam, but I'm not sure.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: How big was this town they took you to? Would you call this a city?

MR. POWERS: No, it was still a town, but much larger than the other. They brought me directly in and into a building and kept me there awhile, and then came directly out of the building and left, so I didn't see much of this place.

MR. HOUSTON: Would you give for the record your recollection of just what they said to you when you first got your helmet off or indicated to you in any other instance.

MR. POWERS: Well, they were trying to talk to me, and of course I couldn't talk to them.

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[REDACTED] What did you say?

MR. POWERS: I don't know whether I said anything or not -- maybe

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just shook my head or shrugged my shoulders or something. I really don't remember.

I don't think I said anything. I had a pistol, a knife -- they took those as soon as they got me on my feet there. Oh, one of them indicated to me by sign language -- he kept pointing to me and holding up two fingers, and I assumed he was asking me if there were two people, and I didn't understand what he meant at first, but he did this two or three times and then he pointed up in the air, and I'm almost positive I saw another parachute. But I told them I was alone -- I just pointed to myself and said "one" - or held up one finger -- and they just turned me around and put me in the car and we left.

5X1 : That was just before they put you in the first car - the first time?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

25X1 And this parachute you saw -- did it have any markings on it? Was it some color - red, yellow, or something?

MR. POWERS: It seemed to me it was very similar to the parachute I had -- two colors, or maybe one color -- but it wasn't white, I know that.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Was it way up in the air?

MR. POWERS: Very high.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: What do you mean by very high?

MR. POWERS: Well, I couldn't distinguish anything hanging underneath.

I wasn't even positive it was a parachute until I got to thinking about it later -- and it was coming down very slow -- but after thinking about it I'm almost positive

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it was a parachute. I can't be absolutely sure.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: The reason you think it was a parachute was not because of its shape but because of the way it was acting?

MR. POWERS: Well, the shape mostly -- the round shape -- and it seemed to me that it had some sort of a red or orange color to it -- and our parachutes have the same thing, so that they can be easily spotted when the pilot hits the ground.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Was it coming with the wind, or did you notice that? Was there something in the behavior of it that also made you think it was a parachute?

MR. POWERS: I really don't know what made me think it was a parachute, except maybe the shape, the color, and the slowness of the descent. I don't know how long I looked at it but I could see it wasn't falling fast.

MR. BROSS: You heard no sounds at this time -- sounds of another aircraft? You weren't conscious of hearing anything?

MR. POWERS: No, sir.

MR. HOUSTON: Had you had any indications of other aircraft in the area before the incident?

MR. POWERS: No. I had been watching very closely up until just a short time before this happened because I had seen these condensation trails before. And I had what we called a drift sight that you could look from horizon to horizon, all around the aircraft - underneath, and I kept going around the horizon looking for condensation trails and anything else I could see, and didn't see a thing except those two that I mentioned earlier.

Now I don't know how long this turn took -- this turn that I


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made before the explosion occurred - I don't know how long that took, but I did not scan the horizon during this time, and also after I had levelled out I was lining up on my course and didn't look around, so I couldn't have seen anything if it had been there the last two to four minutes before, but before that I think I could have seen condensation trails if there had been any.

MR. HOUSTON: You think this was a period of two to four minutes?

MR. POWERS: It was several minutes, because the turn itself I think takes about two minutes -- maybe a little longer.

MR. HOUSTON: Do you remember the time of the turn? You made a notation--

MR. POWERS: I made a notation on the map but I can't remember what it was. It was very close to the scheduled time that I should be at this point.

MR. BROSS: Do you remember approximately what the time was at this point?

MR. POWERS: No. I have tried to recall that and can't. I know it was in the morning there, and it was close to the hour, but what hour I don't know.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: After they took you to this second town they took you in a building there?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: And they turned you over -- these country people that had you turned you over to some official or some official looking person?

MR. POWERS: I think when I got there there was one man in uniform

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and several fairly well dressed civilians -- and the people who had me first were not well dressed, so I assumed these were some kind of officials.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: How long did they keep you there, and did they ask you a lot of questions?

MR. POWERS: No, not at this time, because there was no one there that could speak English.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: They kept you there some period of time -- was that a half-hour, a couple of hours, a day?

MR. POWERS: I would say roughly two hours -- maybe a little longer.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Then they took you to a still larger place?

MR. POWERS: Yes, to the city of Sverdlovsk.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Did the people who were there in that building take you over to Sverdlovsk?

MR. POWERS: There were some people that arrived after I was there. They made a lot of telephone calls while I was there, and several people kept coming in.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: How did they take you over to Sverdlovsk?

MR. POWERS: It was in a military vehicle larger than our jeep. There were three of us in the back seat - an officer on my left, myself, and a soldier with an automatic rifle or tommygun or something on the right -- and a man in civilian clothes in the front, and a driver. Then there was a car behind, and I don't know how many people in that.

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[REDACTED] How were you dressed at this time?

MR. POWERS: They had stripped me to my underwear at this place, had kept my pressure suit, gave me my winter flying suit back to put on, and my boots, so I still had my underwear, boots, and outer flying suit at this time.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Did any of these people talk English?

MR. POWERS: No.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Approximately how long did it take them to get you from this place into Sverdlovsk? Was that an hour, two hours--

MR. POWERS: I would say roughly 30 minutes. It was paved road, though.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Did you sense in any way what direction you were going into Sverdlovsk? Did you have any idea whether you came in from the south, or east, or west, or north?

MR. POWERS: I was thinking I came in from the south or southeast.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: That was your impression?

MR. POWERS: That was my impression from the maps -- from where I was when this happened. I don't know where I hit exactly on the ground.

MR. HOUSTON: Do you remember any particular landmarks?

MR. POWERS: It seems that I can remember coming down in the parachute seeing a lake with a dam in the river, and if I'm not mistaken it was west of my position, because I had been looking at this from the aircraft itself earlier.

MR. HOUSTON: Did you see an airfield?

MR. POWERS: I can remember seeing some kind of a tower, and I think

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it was an airfield control tower. But this airfield was not on the map.

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[REDACTED] Were there woods, fields--

MR. POWERS: There were both fields and woods.

MR. HOUSTON: As you drove into the city did you see any landmarks

or peculiar buildings or anything to identify your approach?

MR. POWERS: It seems to me we passed through one other town - not

too large. It seems there was quite a bit of woods on the way.

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[REDACTED] Any lakes?

MR. POWERS: I never saw any lakes, no.

MR. BROSS: You don't remember noticing the position of the sun at

this point?

MR. POWERS: No, I don't.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Was it still daylight when they took you into

Sverdlovsk?

MR. POWERS: It was morning there -- fairly early in the morning --

8:00 o'clock or 9:00 o'clock -- seems like 8:00 o'clock rings some sort of a bell.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Now judging from the time that it took them to

take you from the place where you came down, put you in this little car, and over a

dirt road, and what not -- I think you said about half an hour, or something in that

neighborhood, and then from this town where the new group picked you up and put you

in their car and took you into Sverdlovsk, which was about another half hour -- I

suppose it was at a faster speed?

MR. POWERS: Yes, this was on a paved road and they drove very fast.

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JUDGE PRETTYMAN: So they may have covered what - 15 or 20 miles?

MR. POWERS: I really don't know.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: What I was trying to figure is -- it's clear enough that the point at which you came down and the city of Sverdlovsk - this wasn't a very great distance -- wasn't more than 15, 20 or 25 miles?

MR. POWERS: I estimated something like 25 miles. I really don't know. This is only an estimation.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Now you have already mentioned this, but I ask the specific question: did you ever circle around Sverdlovsk before this thing happened?

MR. POWERS: You mean in the aircraft?

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Yes, in the aircraft.

MR. POWERS: No. I was directly on my flight course, and as far as I know the airplane went straight down. Now it might have made some maneuvers, but it wouldn't have covered very much distance, I'm sure.

MR. HOUSTON: And you never went past -- this very definitely happened before you arrived--

MR. POWERS: Never did get over Sverdlovsk. I could see the city after I rolled -- just slightly to the right.

[REDACTED] Was it ahead of you?

MR. POWERS: Yes. And I was right on course there.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: And you never did fly the plane -- after you got in this neighborhood of Sverdlovsk you never did fly the plane at any altitude except

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around 70,000 feet?

MR. POWERS: I was right on my altitude at 70,000 feet on the course -- never left my course from the time I had picked it up--

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Did you fly the plane for any period of time at 37,000 feet?

MR. POWERS: No, sir. I was trying to get out at this time.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: I mean before anything happened to you.

MR. POWERS: No. I was at 70,000 feet.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: And you never did drop down to 37,000 feet and fly around for some distance?

MR. POWERS: No, sir. I saw this radar plot that had this on there, and I told someone and I'll tell you that I would like to take a lie detector test on this -- because radar - well, who can believe me when they see radar plots? And I know it didn't happen -- so I'm perfectly willing--

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Well, tell us about that. As I say, we want to hear your story. Would you like to take the test?

MR. POWERS: Well, I'm not eager to take one, but if there is any suspicion whatsoever that I am not telling the truth I would be very glad to take one.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Well, we will come back to that. Tell me this: do you like to fly?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: That was the reason you went into the Air Corps.

MR. POWERS: Yes.


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JUDGE PRETTYMAN: This plane, I suppose -- I don't know a thing in the world about it but I suppose different planes or different kinds of planes have different characteristics known to a pilot. I mean, this one is hard to handle, and this one is faster, and this one does this way -- they are sort of like automobiles, they have different characteristics -- is that true about planes?

MR. POWERS: Yes, it is.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: What about this one. Is this a hard one to handle? What are the characteristics of the plane -- I don't mean technically, but just generally speaking.

MR. POWERS: Well, the hardest part of flying this airplane was landing. Another thing that you had to be very careful about at the higher altitudes was your air speed, and it required constant attention.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Well, explain to me why it was that you had to watch your speed.

MR. POWERS: Well, at high altitudes you are flying very close to the stalling speed of the aircraft, so if you get too slow--

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: So at a high altitude that is more characteristic than at a low altitude?

MR. POWERS: At low altitudes you don't have this.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: This was at high altitudes?

MR. POWERS: Yes -- you are just a few knots above stalling speed and a few knots below the Mach limitation of the aircraft.

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JUDGE PRETTYMAN: What does that mean?

MR. POWERS: That means you can't exceed this speed or you start getting vibrations.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: You have to go just so fast--

MR. POWERS: You have a small leeway there -- I don't remember exactly how much but there were I'd say maybe four or five knots each side of the scheduled speed. I really don't know. It varied on different aircraft.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: But on this plane you had to watch that carefully at all times?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Was it more important to watch it going around a curve -- when you were making a turn?

MR. POWERS: Not particularly. You just had to watch it all the time.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: What would happen if you went too fast or too slow -- if you went outside this limit you had there, what would the airplane do?

MR. POWERS: If you went too slow it would shudder and stall and drop, and then you would have to make a recovery.

MR. HOUSTON: You had experienced this?

MR. POWERS: Yes, I have experienced this many times.

And if you went too fast -- well, different aircraft have different characteristics, but the U-2's themselves - most of them followed about the same pattern -- you would get a flutter or a vibration in the wings caused by the turbulence of the air over the wings, and if you went on past that point -- which

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I had never done -- it could be dangerous.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Why dangerous? It would come to pieces?

MR. POWERS: It could come to pieces if you kept accelerating.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Well, are you pretty sure you didn't go over
this speed?

MR. POWERS: I'm positive, yes, because I was watching that very
closely. You had to to fly the airplane.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Now tell me this -- and I say to you once again,
we like to hear your account of this thing -- now you must have some notion of what
happened to you. I mean, what was it that caused this bump or what have you -- you
must have some idea, thinking back, or do you?

MR. POWERS: I have thought about this a lot. I have never experienced
an explosion in an aircraft. I don't know what it would be like if the airplane
itself - say the engine itself exploded. But I feel sure that you could definitely
tell it was in the aircraft, because of the shock wave through the metal, if nothing
else -- you could feel it, I'm sure. This seemed to me to be external of the aircraft,
because I felt no shock at the time, just what seemed like a slight push, and I don't
know where I get the impression but I have had the impression since that day that it
was behind me and to the right -- and I don't know what I base this on - it's just
in my mind.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: You don't have any notion of whether a fighter
pilot came up and took a poke at you?

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MR. POWERS: I have no idea.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Or a rocket?

MR. POWERS: I saw nothing.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: But you have a very definite view, which isn't based on something you figured afterward but it was your feeling at the time -- is that what you are telling us? -- that it was external of the plane?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Could it have been just one of the fins tearing off?

MR. POWERS: Well, I don't know what that would cause -- but I don't think so. There would be no explosion caused by that. Even if the whole tail came off I don't think it would cause an explosion.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: But it was definitely an explosion?

MR. POWERS: Yes, there was definitely some kind of explosion.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: How do you say explosion -- was it noise or the suddenness of it, or what was it?

MR. POWERS: Well, it sounded -- this WHOOMP -- it sounded like a dull explosion -- maybe like some dynamite underground, that isn't in the open air. And the glow.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Have you in your own mind accounted for that glow in any way, shape or form?

MR. POWERS: No. It seemed to me to last too long to be a part of the explosion. I think an explosion would be something like a flash bulb - just very fast. But this was there all the time that I was looking -- and I don't know

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how long I looked -- maybe just one second, maybe more or less just up and back, but it seems that I looked around -- I really don't know -- but it was there all the time. But I don't remember ever seeing it again after that one time. It didn't appear to be smoke -- just everything was orange.

MR. HOUSTON: Suppose -- and I assume this was probably impossible, but supposing somehow there had been a release of fuel and that had ignited in an explosive manner but had left a flame - sort of a fireball up there -- would that be something--

MR. POWERS: I really don't know, but I don't think this fuel would ignite in the open air.

MR. HOUSTON: I'm trying to get an impression of what it would be like if fuel ignited in the air, if it might leave a lasting glow - more than a flash.

MR. POWERS: I don't remember flame -- I just remember color.

MR. HOUSTON: You said it kept its color--

MR. POWERS: Well, I don't know what color flame this fuel burns with.

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 Where is the engine of the aircraft?

MR. POWERS: Behind the pilot.

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 Underneath the pilot?

MR. POWERS: The air intakes to the engine are just behind the cockpit, and the engine is -- I don't know - six to eight feet back -- the front part of the engine.

MR. HOUSTON: The engine is behind the equipment?

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MR. POWERS: Yes, the equipment is between the engine and the pilot.

MR. HOUSTON: And the fuel tanks--

MR. POWERS: There is one tank on the engine that holds a small amount of fuel -- I don't remember the exact amount -- but all the rest of the fuel is in the wings.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Is there anything else on your mind that you want to tell us? We have seen your tapes - your account of it.

MR. HOUSTON: I'd like to ask a question, if I may. Did you at any time after you were picked up and taken to Sverdlovsk -- you knew, of course, that you were going to be questioned?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: Did you in your own mind try to formulate a plan of how you would handle the questioning?

MR. POWERS: I did at some time during this period but I can't recall exactly when it was.

MR. HOUSTON: Before the questioning started?

MR. POWERS: Yes. I know when they first got an interpreter I tried to tell them the story I was off course and didn't know where I was, and they brought out my Russian money, my Russian escape maps, and a bunch of stuff like that, that completely shot the story.

MR. HOUSTON: The story didn't last very long.

[REDACTED] Somebody was asking these questions or talking to you

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in English, I take it?

MR. POWERS: Yes, at Sverdlovsk. I stayed there -- it was a short time -- apparently they wanted to get me on this airplane - I think it was a commercial airplane - to Moscow, and they didn't have much time, but they did a thorough search - the first thorough search they did -- they asked some questions, I told them this story, and it was shot immediately because they had this stuff with them.

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 This was in Sverdlovsk?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

Now it might have been between Sverdlovsk and Moscow -- because it was a two or three hour trip on the airplane -- that I formed a plan that I would try to follow. I knew that they would have a lot of evidence, because I had already seen part of it -- I knew that I was going to be questioned, and I felt sure that I would be tortured, so I formed a plan that I would try to tell them -- make them believe that everything I said was the truth, so that some of the things that I thought were very important - when I told them a lie about this they would think it was the truth. And I tried to carry this out. Maybe I overdid it a little, I don't know. But I think I convinced them that some of the things -- well, they don't know some of the things from me that I think they would have liked to have known very much.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: You very consciously lied about certain things you considered important to conceal -- and in order to protect that you say you told them frankly the truth about things--

MR. POWERS: That seemed to me to be relatively unimportant compared to the things that I thought were important.

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MR. BROSS: Or things you thought they knew anyway.

MR. POWERS: Well, I got the impression during the interrogation that they didn't know near as much about our outfit as we assumed that they did or thought that they did.

MR. HOUSTON: You mean by the nature of their questioning -- you thought the questioning would be more precise if they knew as much as we thought--

MR. POWERS: Yes.

My main worry during this time was about what would be released to the press. I wanted everything I said to conform with information that would be released, and I didn't know what would be released and that worried me for a long time.

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[REDACTED] What press was this?

MR. POWERS: American press.

MR. HOUSTON: In other words, you would assume this episode would obviously become known at home, and there would be press talk, and speculation, and announcements, etc.?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: And you were trying to estimate what they would be so--

MR. POWERS: That was part of the plan, to try to anticipate what it would be. That was the main reason I mentioned Colonel Shelton -- I thought his name would definitely be there. Maybe it wouldn't have been -- I don't know. Well, I was convinced that it would be, because these newspaper reporters seemed to have a good system of their own.

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MR. HOUSTON: This was the rationale by which you decided to give them Colonel Shelton's name and a couple of others?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: You withheld other names?

MR. POWERS: Yes, I withheld many names.

MR. HOUSTON: Ones they were trying to get?

MR. POWERS: Yes. They tried very much to get the names of the other pilots. They don't have them. Although, I had a coat -- part of my survival equipment -- that belonged to [REDACTED] and the bag that coat was in had the name [REDACTED] written on it. They never asked a question about this, and I was waiting on it because I had seen that during one of the interrogations. I don't know why they didn't ask that question -- but the name never did come up. I had already made up a story, after I had seen this, that he was a personal equipment man -- and I think they would have bought it.

MR. HOUSTON: Did they ask you for the names of other pilots?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

[REDACTED] What was your answer?

MR. POWERS: I just refused.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: How long were you questioned -- how many days -- in what they call the preliminary investigation or something like that.

MR. POWERS: Well, the investigation officially ended on the last

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of June -- the 30th of June -- and it started on May the 1st. Now there were some -- in the latter part some days there were no interrogations, but most all of May it was every day and as much as 11 and 12 hours a day -- that was just a few days it went this long -- most of the time I would say six to nine, or something like that. This was the first part. It got shorter as time went on.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Did a relay of officials question you, or just one or two, or how did they do that? Did they change all the time?

MR. POWERS: No, it was predominantly done by two Majors -- but of course there were periods of time that they brought experts in to ask questions, and other people would ask questions about the equipment - the personal equipment, etc. But most of the investigation was conducted by these two people.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Did they go over and over and over the same ground?

MR. POWERS: Oh they went over -- a lot of repetition.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: During this period you say they questioned you for six or eight hours, how did they treat you? Were you seated?

MR. POWERS: Yes, I was seated all the time during the questioning.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Was it in an office?

MR. POWERS: It was in an office. Most of it took place in one office. There was a couple of times I was taken to some other rooms.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Did they feed you in between times?

MR. POWERS: Not there but in the cell. We would take a break for dinner, and sometimes just a break in between -- I didn't know whether it was over

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for the day or any minute they would come back. But at first there was usually two in the morning, two in the afternoon, and a couple of times one at night. And later on it was say two in the morning, two in the afternoon, and still later it was one in the morning, maybe two in the afternoon, or vice versa -- but it kept getting less and less as time went on.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Was it a very exhausting sort of thing from your point of view? Did you lose weight during this period? At the end of the day were you exhausted?

MR. POWERS: Completely exhausted at the end of the day. But I did lose some weight. I didn't eat for a long time -- I couldn't eat.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: During this period or after you were sentenced?

MR. POWERS: During the first several weeks -- I had no appetite. They even offered -- they asked me what I liked -- any food I wanted. But I couldn't eat it, and I never requested them to bring anything. The food there was much better than it was at the other prison, so apparently it was better food than they normally give prisoners -- I don't know.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Did they give you a chance to exercise during this time?

MR. POWERS: At first in between interrogations I could go out -- well, it was on top of a building - a courtyard with walls around it, and you walk around in there. These varied in length, depending on the interrogations, at first, and then later on they were a little longer, and after the investigation was over as

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much as three hours some days -- most of the time one and a half or two hours.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: They didn't give you a little vodka preliminary to your dinner?

MR. POWERS: On the night of the trial -- I think the first night -- they gave me a drink of cognac. And it tasted good.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: That was the first time--

MR. POWERS: Yes.

GENERAL BULL: In repeating the same questions in the investigation how often did they pick you up in conflicts of testimony, and say: "Here you said so and so"?

MR. POWERS: Several times -- not too frequently, but there were several times. Like I had told them I didn't even know there were cameras on board, except a small camera that I had seen the film from and I knew they had it as part of the wreckage -- I had seen it previously at the first little village they took me to -- I saw that, so admitted we always carry a tracker camera. I told them I had no idea of what the other equipment was. I had forgotten that on our own checklist it says "camera" - written out in plain language -- and they had the checklist. So I told them I did know the cameras were there but I had no idea how they worked because we weren't allowed to see them.

GENERAL BULL: Would they bear down a little heavier after a conflict like that?

MR. POWERS: They had a lot of repetition -- they didn't seem to


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bear down any heavier after they had caught me a little off what they thought was the truth.

GENERAL BULL: Would they accuse you of lying?

MR. POWERS: They never did come out and say, "You are lying", that I can remember. But after asking a question and I made an answer they would look at me and say, "Is that true?" "Is that right?" -- and stuff like this. But they never did come out and say, "You are lying".

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 Was this through an interpreter?

MR. POWERS: Yes, through an interpreter.

MR. HOUSTON: Were there specific items you believe you successfully concealed from them which you believed were important? For instance, you said you

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did know of

MR. POWERS: Well, there were three primary things: one was the

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 another was the flights that the Detachment had made over some of the Middle Eastern countries, and the other - I tried to give the impression that 68,000 feet was the maximum altitude of the aircraft.

MR. HOUSTON: And you think you were successful in all--

MR. POWERS: Well, it seemed to me that I convinced them on the altitude. The other things -- they didn't ask about the Middle Eastern areas, that I can remember.

MR. HOUSTON: They just appeared to assume the entire concentration was on the Soviet area?

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MR. POWERS: Yes, and I tried to give them that impression.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: There was a flight into Russia on April 9th --

did they ask you about that?

MR. POWERS: Yes, they did.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Were you in that?

MR. POWERS: If that pilot hadn't taken it, I would have taken it.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: You were the back-up pilot?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Did that one actually go into Russia?

MR. POWERS: Yes, it did.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: What happened to it?

MR. POWERS: They just asked me at first where I was on April 9th, and I told them I couldn't remember where I was on April 9th. And I asked them what day it was, and they said it was on Saturday, and I told them I was probably drunk in a club, and they sort of laughed and let it go at that. But they told me there had been a flight on April 9th. I said, "Well, why didn't you shoot him down?" They said, "Well, he didn't get very far inside -- we didn't know what his intentions were -- maybe he just got off course or something." But he got farther than that.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: The April 9th flight actually did go into Russia?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Then did it abort and go back?

MR. POWERS: It was completed, as far as I know.

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JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Did you say you had been yourself on another flight, or two flights or something, into Russia on the U-2?

MR. POWERS: There was one into Russia -- one over Mongolia to the Soviet border, and I had instructions there if it was cloudy to turn around and come back, and it was cloudy, so I came to the border and turned around and came back.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: But there was one into Russia--

MR. POWERS: Yes, this was in the area between the Caspian and the Black Sea.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Did that go far into Russia?

MR. POWERS: Between 100 and 200 miles at the farthest point in, but it went back and forth over several areas there.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: And then came back?

MR. POWERS: Came South and then back to the original base.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: That was the only one where you yourself in a U-2 actually went into Russia?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

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[REDACTED] In their questioning of you did they try to tie you into the Air Force or to the military?

MR. POWERS: Well, even when they were taking me to Berlin this interpreter kept telling me that I would be able to get back in the Air Force, and all that. I told him I was not Air Force. But at first they didn't seem to do it, but later they seemed to want an Air Force connection and seemed to want to tie me in.

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I really can't say they tried to tie me into it, because I didn't think too much about that until here when some of the questions were asked -- and I can't remember.

MR. HOUSTON: Did they try to make anything out of the fact that you had a civilian ID card?

MR. POWERS: They went over that very thoroughly.

MR. HOUSTON: It doesn't sound like extremely hostile questioning -- not a belligerent attitude?

MR. POWERS: There was no belligerent attitude. I kept expecting them to really get rough, but they never did.

MR. HOUSTON: How about after the sentence when they put you in a permanent prison, did they keep after you during that time?

MR. POWERS: No, there were only two times that people came to see me there for questioning, and that was on some of the equipment, and I told them I had just forgotten about it, gave them a wrong answer or two, that I knew they would know was wrong, and they didn't bother me anymore after that. The last one was in December of 1960. And these were not the investigators who did the interrogation but seemed to be groups of experts, or professional engineering types.

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 Did they ask you much about CIA?

MR. POWERS: Yes. They wanted to know if I knew any buildings here in Washington, what training I had had in espionage work. And I told them that I was only a pilot. They didn't know that I had received this escape and evasion training with the CIA. I told them, about the buildings, that all my contacts were made in various hotel rooms around Washington, and no buildings that I knew of - no office buildings.

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MR. HOUSTON: As a matter of fact you did know of the main office over on K Street?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: During the time when you were in prison after your sentence did they try to indoctrinate you? I don't know exactly how to use the word but from Korea I believe we had the word "brainwashed", which, as I understand it, means telling you something until it seeps into your soul or something. Did they keep giving you communist stuff?

MR. POWERS: They did none of this, but my only news source was communistic. Like they let me read the American Worker, and the British Daily Worker, and the Moscow News in English. They allowed one other sort of news magazine -- I guess it's a news magazine -- the Nation, which is definitely to the left but not communistic, I don't think.

MR. HOUSTON: Did they give you an issue of the Nation telling all about Cuba?

MR. POWERS: Yes, I got that. But on January 2nd of this year they brought in six National Geographics for the last six months of last year, and some Nation magazines up until November, but there were several copies missing, and from the Letters to the Editor of these magazines I could see that they had withheld the story that they had printed on the CIA and the FBI. I don't know why. I'd like to have read those.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Now tell me this -- you are a fairly experienced young man, well educated young man - what affect does this constantly letting you


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read nothing but communist newspapers have on a Tennessee boy?

MR. POWERS: It has an affect.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: What?

MR. POWERS: Well, you know that it's wrong but yet this is all you see. I'd say the effect is not very much. But I think there is a tendency to believe what you read, and even though you know it might be a lie, you read it, there is a tendency there to believe.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Even for a mountain boy like yourself?

MR. POWERS: Well, I wasn't worried about it. I pretended more or less to believe more of it than I could ever possibly believe. My best news source was actually the British Daily Worker, which is a British communist newspaper, but they had a lot of international news that never appeared from any other source, and apparently fairly accurate, especially when events happened. Of course you know that it's colored.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Well, looking at yourself now and comparing back with your general attitude toward things before this experience and after this period of twenty months of reading these newspapers, how do you figure -- you yourself in your own mind -- has it changed you very much?

MR. POWERS: Oh no, I don't think I've been changed -- maybe so -- I don't know -- but not in that respect. I think I have just grown up a little. But as far as believing all this stuff - no.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: They didn't actually come and lecture to you --

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I mean, sit you down and say: Now this is what is happening in Russia -- this is a great system -- etc., etc., etc.

MR. POWERS: Now they encouraged me to ask questions about things about the Soviet Union I didn't understand. I asked a few, but not many. And they didn't come around very often. I had a cell mate at Vladimir , the prison there, after I had transferred from Moscow -- and he isn't a communist - at least he didn't appear to be.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: He is not a communist?

MR. POWERS: He certainly didn't appear to be.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Could he talk English?

MR. POWERS: Yes -- he spoke fairly poorly when I first arrived, but improved quite a bit. In fact, he spoke several languages.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Did he have an ^{East}Tennessee accent?

MR. POWERS: A little South/Virginia, probably, when I left. He ^{west} had a slight British accent, but not very much.

MR. HOUSTON: Did you get to know him pretty well?

MR. POWERS: Well, I knew him, and liked him.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: What was he in there for?

MR. POWERS: He was a Latvian -- which was taken into the Soviet Union after the war. Well, actually I think it was during the early part of the war -- the Germans drove them out and then they came back. He has been in the Soviet Union since then. He left Latvia with the German troops fighting Russia -- he joined the

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German Army. After the war he was in a prisoner of war camp -- a British prisoner of war camp. Then a displaced person. Then he worked for the British. Then he got some intelligence training in England. He was sent back to Latvia as what he called a Partisan. In the summers they lived in the woods, and in the winters in farmhouses somewhere. He was a radio operator he said. He was captured and sentenced as a traitor, I think it was.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Sentenced by Russia?

MR. POWERS: Yes -- 15 years.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: You got the impression he was no part of a communist?

MR. POWERS: Well, if he was he wasn't a good one. He had a lot of socialistic ideas -- but he criticized them, also.

MR. HOUSTON: Did you pretty much accept this story of what he was?

MR. POWERS: Yes, I think he was telling the truth.

MR. HOUSTON: Did you think you should test it, or maybe not accept it?

MR. POWERS: Well, I didn't know him well enough to confide in him.

I liked the boy, I felt sorry for him, and I'm sure he could be trusted -- but I could never talk to him about anything, because I didn't know. And there had been an offer while I was in Moscow to give me a cell mate who spoke English -- this was during the investigation -- and later on I found out this is illegal according to their own laws -- but I refused -- I told them I would rather be alone.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: You said something or somebody referred to East Tennessee, and you corrected it to Southwest Virginia.

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JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Your folks have lived down there for several generations, I believe.

MR. POWERS: I think my grandfather came there in 1904.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Where do you get your black hair and eyes?

MR. POWERS: Well, I really don't know.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Where did he come in there from? Virginia?

MR. POWERS: I think he came from somewhere in West Virginia into that part of Virginia. But my grandmother was part Indian -- I think half -- I'm not sure.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Your grandmother on your father's side?

MR. POWERS: Yes. I have read some of the history of the family and the name, but this was many years ago, and it seems there is some French blood into England and then to the States, so it might be a combination of French, the Indian, and anything else that might have gotten in along the way.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: I was just curious, because I was born down in Lexington.

MR. POWERS: Do you know where Grundy is?

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Yes.

MR. POWERS: That is where I went to highschool.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: I noticed in the record, too, that your mother and father are active in the Methodist Church.

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MR. POWERS: The Church of Christ. My wife and myself are
Methodists.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: I'm interested because my father was a Methodist
preacher down in Knoxville, down in the same general territory. Your father and
mother were brethren in the Church of Christ?

MR. POWERS: Yes.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Is there anything else you would like us to know,
because I say to you that we are charged with collecting what information is available
about this incident, and evaluating it, and I'm sure my brethren would join me -- we
would like to know anything you would like to tell us.

MR. POWERS: Well, I'll be glad to answer any questions.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: If there is anything that occurs to you that
you would like us to have in mind--

MR. HOUSTON: I might raise one other point. Since Mr. Powers has
offered to take the polygraph on that business of the incident as it happened, I'd
like to ask him in these other matters -- when you are under interrogation,
obviously there is no possible way to corroborate -- would you also be amenable if
some of these questions you have had here would be on the polygraph?

MR. POWERS: Yes. I don't like this test, but--

MR. HOUSTON: I realize that, but you are here and you are testifying
under oath, and there is no reason to question, but on the other hand there is no
possible way of corroborating--


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MR. POWERS: Yes, I'm willing. There was one thing that made me angry there during one of the interrogations -- they asked me if I had ever had a lie detector test, and I said no -- I had had one, but I didn't think it was any of their business. They had read it in the New York Times. I thought that was just giving them ideas, and I didn't like that. But they didn't -- they just said they didn't do such things, and they didn't on me, and I suppose it's a very good thing, because I have had one, and I react.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: I don't have anything else.

MR. HOUSTON: I have no further questions.

MR. BROSS: I have no questions to ask.

GENERAL BULL: I have none.

JUDGE PRETTYMAN: Thank you, sir.

MR. HOUSTON: Thank you very much.

. . . . The meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.


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